

Message Text

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ACTION ST-01

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----- 071093

R 281820Z FEB 74

FM AMEMBASSY SANTIAGO

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 7612

INFO AMCONSUL GUAYAQUIL ECUADOR

UNCLAS SANTIAGO 0975

E.O.11652:N/A

TAGS: ATRN ASUP, ETRN

SUBJ: TRANSPORTATION OF OFFICIAL SHIPMENTS

REF: GUAYAQUIL 168

SUMMARY: EMBASSY HAS BEEN EXPERIENCING CONTINUING PROBLEMS WITH PRUDENTIAL GRACE LINES (US FLAG CARRIER) IN GETTING OFFICIAL SHIPMENTS INTO CHILE. RESULT IS AN INORDINATE DELAY IN DELIVERIES, DEFINITE EFFECT ON HERETOFORE GOOD MORALE OF EMPLOYEES ASSIGNED TO THIS POST, AND DIFFICULTY IN MAINTAINING EFFICIENT OPERATIONS.

1. PRIOR TO FEBRUARY PGL HAD MAINTAINED A VERY ERRATIC SCHEDULE OF CALLS AT CHILEAN PORTS. AT THE END OF JANUARY AN EMPLOYEE OF PGL'S LOCAL REPRESENTATIVE, GRACE AND COMPANY, ADVISED EMBASSY OFFICER THAT PGL WOULD BE CALLING EVERY TEN TO FIFTEEN DAYS BECAUSE OF A COMMITMENT PGL HAD TO CARRY CHILEAN FRUIT NORTH. THE FIRST TWO SHIPS SCHEDULED TO ARRIVE IN FEBRUARY DID ARRIVE ON SCHEDULE, FEBRUARY 3 AND 16, HOWEVER THE SANTA ISABEL, SCHEDULED TO ARRIVE FEBRUARY 28 WAS CANCELLED ENTIRELY. THE NEXT SCHEDULED ARRIVAL IS THE SANTA LUCIA O/A MARCH 9. IN OTHER WORDS PGL, AFTER HAVING TWO SHIPS ARRIVE ON TIME, IS BACK TO THEIR USUAL ERRATIC SCHEDULE.

2. ONE OUTSTANDING INSTANCE OF AN INCOMING HHE SHIPMENT IS DETAILED BELOW:

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A. CONSIGNED " SANTA BARBARA" - NOVEMBER 1973 PGL

CHANGED CARRIER TWICE ("SANTA LUCIA" -LATER "SANTA CRUZ"). LATTER VESSEL DOESN'T NORMALLY CALL AT CHILEAN PORTS - AND DID NOT ON THIS VOYAGE.

B. THIS SHIPMENT MADE IT AS FAR AS BARRANQUILLA, COLOMBIA, WHERE, ACCORDING TO PGL REP IT WAS OFFLOADED BECAUSE OF "BUNKERING" PROBLEMS.

C. TWO MONTHS LATER PGL WAS UNABLE CONFIRM WHEREABOUTS THIS SHIPMENT. THEY SUSPECTED IT MAY BE IN GUAYAQUIL, ECUADOR BUT UNABLE STATE HOW OR WHEN IT ARRIVED THERE.

D. SHIPMENT FINALLY ARRIVED VALPARAISO FEBRUARY 16 FROM GUAYAQUIL. (THE CONTAINERS HAVE RECEIVED CONSIDERABLE DAMAGE BUT DAMAGE TO CONTENTS CANNOT BE VERIFIED UNTIL CLEARED THROUGH CHILEAN CUSTOMS.)

E. DELAY OF MORE THAN THREE MONTHS, OR TWO AND ONE HALF MONTHS MORE THAN NECESSARY.

3. ONE OTHER SHIPMENT FOLLOWED SIMILAR TREATMENT EXCEPT THAT IT STILL HAS NOT ARRIVED IN CHILE NOR CAN PGL ADVISE AS TO ITS WHEREABOUTS. (THIS SHIPMENT BELONGS TO JOSEPH E. MCMANUS, STATE EMPLOYEE, AND WAS SCHEDULED FOR SHIPMENT ON BOARD THE SANTA LUCIA, VOYAGE NUMBER 17, B/L NUMBER 1, IN MID-DECEMBER. THE LATEST INFORMATION FROM PGL'S AGENT IS THEY BELIEVE THE SHIPMENT IS IN GUAYAQUIL, HOWEVER THEY SAY THERE IS NO WAY TO TRACE SHIPMENT BECAUSE WHEN IT SUPPOSEDLY OFF-LOADED FROM SANTA CRUZ, NO SHIPPING DOCUMENTS WERE WITH SHIPMENT NOR WAS IT MANIFESTED. THIS SORT OF CARGO MISHANDLING FIRST MENTIONED IN REFTEL ONLY SERVES TO UNDERLINE THE SLIPSHOD MANNER IN WHICH CARGO IS HANDLED BY PGL AND THEIR "NON CARING" ATTITUDE.) IN ADDITION TO AFFECTING THE MORALE OF THE OFFICER, AS IS ALSO THE CASE REPORTED IN PARAGRAPH TWO, THE NON- RECEIPT OF SHIPMENT ALSO AFFECTS HIS EFFECTIVENESS IN HIS POSITION AS HE HAS BEEN IN HIS QUARTERS SEVERAL MONTHS AND IS HAMPERED BY NOT BEING ABLE TO PROVIDE REPRESENTATIONAL TYPE ENTERTAINMENT AS THE MISSING SHIPMENT CONTAINS A DINING ROOM SET. IN ADD-
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ITION TO THE TWO SHIPMENTS MENTIONED ABOVE, THERE ARE SEVERAL OTHER OFFICIAL SHIPMENTS WHICH ARE ALSO EXPERIENCING SIMILAR DELAYS AND THEIR WHEREABOUTS IS LIKEWISE UNKNOWN.

4. EMBASSY HAS NOT BROUGHT THIS PROBLEM TO DEPARTMENT'S ATTENTION SOONER BECAUSE, EITHER THROUGH IGNORANCE OR OTHERWISE, LOCAL PGL AGENT IN VALPARAISO HAS BEEN ASSURING

US OF IMMINENT ARRIVAL OF SHIPMENTS VIA NEXT PGL VESSEL OR THAT IT WOULD BE TRANSFERRED TO THE FIRST AVAILABLE FLAG SHIP FOR DELIVERY TO CHILE. INDICATIONS ARE THAT PGL HAVE NOT KEPT THEIR AGENT ADVISED AS TO THE STATUS OF THESE SHIPMENTS OR WHY THEY WERE OFFLOADED. THE END RESULT IS FRUSTRATION AND UNHAPPINESS FOR THE CONSIGNEES.

5. RECOMMENDATIONS: (A) THAT DEPARTMENT AUTHORIZE FUTURE SHIPMENTS OF HHE BY AIR. (DEPARTMENT MAY RECALL THAT AMBASSADOR POPPER MADE THIS REQUEST WHILE ON CONSULTATION BUT WAS INFORMED THAT COST DIFFERENCE WAS TOO GREAT.) IF THIS IS NOT FEASIBLE AT LEAST THE USE OF FOREIGN FLAG BOTTOMS SHOULD BE AUTHORIZED TO EXPEDITE DELIVERY. (MANY SHIPMENTS ALREADY RECEIVED ON COMPANIA SUD AMERICA DE VAPORES - CHILEAN LINES - HAVE BEEN RECEIVED ON SCHEDULE AND IN GOOD CONDITION.) (B) THAT DEPARTMENT AUTHORIZE AIR SHIPMENT FOR HHE BELONGING JOSEPH F. MCMANUS IN ACCORDANCE WITH 6 FAM 161.D (FOR GUAYAQUIL: REQUEST YOUR ASSISTANCE IN LOCATING SHIPMENT CONSISTING OF ONE SKID CASE - 3/9 X 6/10 X 7/3, 1080 POUNDS, MARKED (JFM), AMERICAN EMBASSY, SANTIAGO, CHILE, DIPLOMATIC CORPS, VIA VALPARAISO. PLEASE NOTIFY IF OFF-LOADED YOUR POST.) (C) DEPARTMENT CONSIDER BRINGING THIS TO THE ATTENTION OF THE FEDERAL MARITIME COMMISSION.

6. IT IS BELIEVED THAT ADDITIONAL COST OF AIR VERSUS SEA SHIPMENT WOULD BE JUSTIFIED BY IMPROVED MORALE, REDUCTION OF MAN-HOURS NECESSARY AT POST TO TRACE SHIPMENTS, REDUCTION OF TEMPORARY HOUSING ALLOWANCES EXPENDED, AND MORE EFFICIENT OPERATION OF EMBASSY.

7. ADVISE.
POPPER
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